

# QUARTERLY REPORT TO COUNCIL

Meeting Date: December 3, 2025

Prepared by: Suzanne Bishop

Department: Library

Division:

Reporting Period: June 11, 2025 – November 29, 2025

CC: City Administrator John Walsh, Kathy Payne,  
Lisa Scholl



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## 1. General Operations (unless otherwise noted, figures are for July 1 – October 31, 2025)

- Building use:
  - 23% increase over 2024
  - Library only: 13,535
  - Columbia Center only (hallway, meeting rooms, Makerspace): 3,720
- Open hours: 820
- Library cards issued: 474
  - 53% increase over 2024
- Summer Library Challenge participants and minutes read
  - Youth participants: 336; 83,183 minutes
  - Teen: 63; 33,670 minutes
  - Adult: 156; 148,242 minutes
- Programs (excluding Summer Library Challenge special programs)
  - Children's storytimes attendance: 394
  - LEGO Free Play: 48
  - Adults and Crafts: 77
  - Monthly Book Club: 48
  - "Birding for Kids" with Tom Myers: 36
- Makerspace users and programs (most Makerspace programming was curtailed during the Summer Library Challenge)
  - Maker Monday (drop-in hours)
  - Makerspace appointments
  - Maker Friday (drop-in hours)
  - Junior Makers (ages 10 – 14): 28
  - Maker Kids (ages 6 – 10): 13
  - Teen Makers (ages 13 – 18): 20
- Hallway displays:
  - Library Adults and Crafts "Bad Art" competition
  - Artwork by Art Happens group

## 2. Staffing & Personnel

- **Library Assistant:** Hiring is underway for a Library Assistant to fill the position recently vacated.

### 3. Projects & Initiatives

#### A. Ongoing Key Projects

- **Oregon Heritage Grant:** \$4,383 awarded to support digitization of the *St. Helens Chronicle* (2019 – 2024), research at the University of Oregon Archives, and community outreach. The project is administered by Patron Services Librarian Brenda Herren-Kenaga.
- **New Makerspace hours:** To better align Youth/Makerspace Librarian Jana Wiersma's hours with the job description, regular Makerspace hours have been reduced, focusing on the most frequently used hours and types of service.
- **Many Lands, Many People Biennial Columbia County Genealogy Conference:** Presented on September 20, 2025. It included two tracks and nationally recognized speakers in a hybrid format. Approximately 40 participants. Mayor Massey and Councilor Sundeen spoke.
- **Local history room:** Continue inventory and catalog of local history materials to make available to the public. Public Services Librarian Brenda Herren-Kenaga has regular office hours and is available for appointments.
- **Library board:** Met on April 14 and May 12. The board is continuing their review of the 2023-2028 strategic plan to recommend updated focus areas. Board member Kelsey Knutson was approved by City Council.
- **Extensive community outreach:** Highlights include presentations to several SHPL classes, a meet and greet with Amani Mental Health, Head Start storytimes, Kiwanis Children's Fair, and Recreation summer camps.
- **Spanish language translation:** this initiative includes translations of Summer Library Challenge schedules, the library welcome brochure and others.
- **Friends of the St. Helens Public Library:** Staff attended their monthly meetings. Provided funds and volunteers to support the Columbia County Biennial Conference, the Summer Library Challenge, and other programs.
- **Seed exchange:** Continuing a successful collaboration with the Master Gardeners of Columbia County.
- **Puzzle exchange:** free exchange, no check out required.
- **Building maintenance:** Annual inspection of security and fire suppression systems. Miscellaneous building repairs included ADA pads.
- **Federal funding:** Future funding for the State Library of Oregon remains contingent on the results of the Congressional reconciliation bill. Funding for the current state fiscal year (ending June 30, 2026) is secured. Potential impacts to the library include extensive services, especially by SLO staff consultation.
- **State Library Board:** Library Director spoke before the State Library of Oregon board about the importance of State Library staff and other resources to the library, especially staff support and online databases.

#### B. Upcoming Projects

- **Columbia County Authors Special Collection:** the library has established a special collection containing books by authors living or working in Columbia County, and members of the St. Helens Writers Guild and the Scappoose Writers Group. The collection will open in February 2026. Library Technician Nicole Woodruff is managing the initiative.

- **First annual Stories by the River Festival:** month-long event will include writers' workshops, arts and crafts programs, events for the public and will culminate in the introduction of *Hidden World*, the first anthology of works by members of the St. Helens Writers' Guild and the Scappoose Writers' Group.
- **Summer Library Challenge:** Staff preparation for the Challenge including scheduling and planning for 2026.

#### **4. Key upcoming Events & Important Dates**

*(Provide information on city-related events, meetings, and deadlines relevant to the department.)*

- Friends of the St. Helens Public Library meeting: December 3
- “Raising Kids in a Digital World” Sesame Street Workshop Family Storytime: December 6
- Library Board meeting: December 8
- Adults and Crafts “Yarn Gnome Ornament”: December 9
- Book Club “Four Agreements” by Don Miguel Ruiz: December 16
- ?? Festival: February 14 – March 14, 2026

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#### **Attachments – n/a**

*(Attach any supporting documents, reports, or visuals necessary for council review.)*